

The Publishing Landscape for Humanities and Social Sciences: Navigation tips for early career researchers

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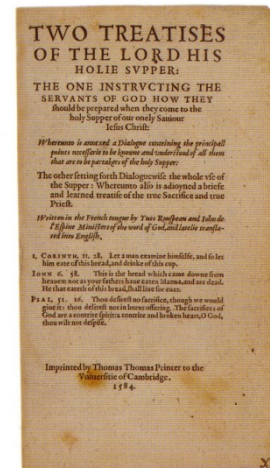
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Cambridge University Press

An integral part of the
University of Cambridge

World's oldest publisher,
founded in 1534

Our first book was
published in 1584



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The academic publishing landscape

- Over 20,000 journals
- More than 2 million articles per year
- More than 200,000 new books each year
- STM: \$14 billion, H&SS: \$2.4 billion (annually)
- Many publishers (in all shapes and sizes)



Your challenge!



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University Presses

- “Not for profit” – what does this mean?
Oxford & Cambridge UPs – self sufficient and net contributor to University revenues; most N American UPs are subsidised by parent university
- Publishing decisions – academic quality & market



Commercial publishers

- **Higher Education/College** – Pearson, Cengage
– focus on learning materials for big courses
- **Professional** – Publishing for practitioners in markets such as law, medicine, parts of engineering
- **Commercial academic** – Taylor & Francis, Palgrave, Elgar

All have high standards but they have to look at the world in a different way to UPs – they must make a profit



The landscape is changing fast!

- **Technology.** Journals business has long been based on digital publication. Digital is more and more important for books
- **Open access** journals and starting to experiment with OA books
- **New formats** - See today's agenda!
- CUP launching hybrid books/journal Cambridge Elements
- **Scholarly Collaboration Networks**
- **Lots of free stuff !** (Both legal and not so legal!)



PUBLISHING WITH CAMBRIDGE



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What are we interested in?

- World class research that makes an “original and significant contribution to the literature”
- Surveys and reviews of major topics suitable for advanced undergraduate and graduate students
- Graduate Textbooks
- Reference
- Practitioner Guides



**I WOULD LIKE TO WRITE A
RESEARCH MONOGRAPH**



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Submitting book proposal to a publisher

- Try and **find the name of the relevant editors** – most publishers' websites list editorial contacts
- **Personal contact** always best!
- Write a **personal email** to editor to give basic details of the book project you would like to discuss. Do not assume they are experts!
- Attach a **book prospectus**, **Do not send full manuscript**



Tips for writing a good prospectus

- Use a **clear , descriptive title** – don't try to make a “clever” title
- A **short** summary of the aims and scope of the book and why you think it makes an **original** and **distinctive** contribution
- A detailed **table of contents** with 200-500 word **summaries** of each chapter and a list of the literature you intend to cite



Tips for a good prospectus (contd)

- Brief description of your **target readership** – hint: much better to be focused and precise than to say that everybody will want to read it!
- Brief analysis of some of the most closely related books to yours. **How will your book add to the literature?**
- Short author biography
- Sample chapters (if available)



TURNING A DISSERTATION INTO A BOOK



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Dissertations

- ✓ Thorough review of previous scholarship
- ✓ Mastery of a specific topic
- X Typically too narrow for book-length treatment
 - Ask Yourself. Have I enough to tell a bigger story? Would I be better to split into journal articles?



Turning a dissertation into a book

- Are those review chapters all necessary? Is additional explanation necessary?
- Does the framework need to be changed to give a strong narrative argument?
- Add topics that you might have considered beyond the scope of a thesis,
- Consider these points **before** approaching a publisher



THE REVIEW PROCESS



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REVIEW STAGES

- **DESK REVIEW** – in house editor will assess whether suitable for list. If yes, then will proceed to peer review. Acceptance rate at this stage varies a lot according to discipline
- **PEER REVIEW** Depending on policy of publisher editor may ask to see full manuscript to send for peer review or may be happy to send prospectus



PEER REVIEW

- Single blind, typically 2-3 reviews per project
- Outcome: decline, revise & resubmit, recommend contract
- Hard work – CUP book editors commission c4000 reports pa.
- Hard work – we often ask referees to read full manuscripts or comment on interdisciplinary work.
- Typically paid with book allowance, but also cash
- Tricky decisions – referees seldom agree with each other

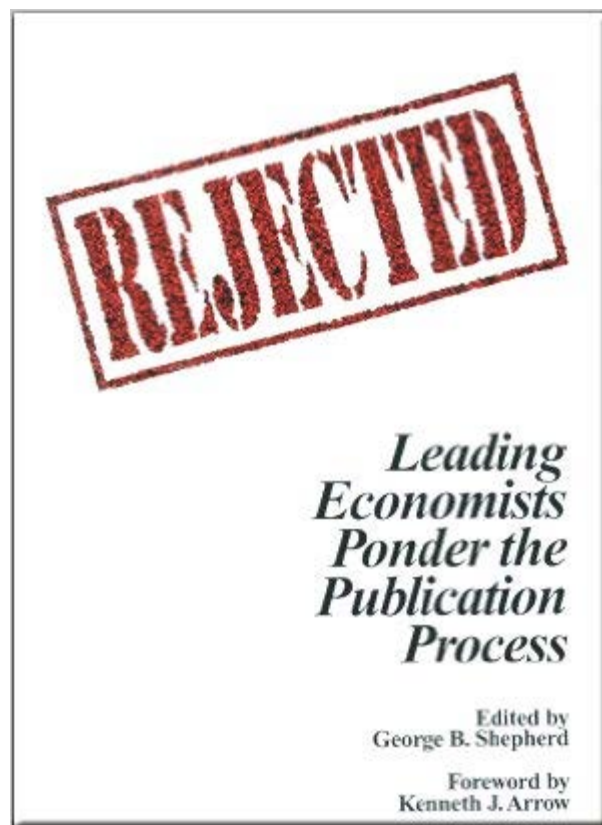


Main differences between book & journal peer review & editorial decision

- Mentor vs Gatekeeper role?
- Typically narrower terms of reference for journal review – books bigger, more complex, often interdisciplinary ... and market matters
- CUP books take peer review stage very seriously and ask a lot from our referees
- Not an exact science in either case



Recommended reading to make you feel better



Economics Nobel laureate Kenneth Arrow:
"the publication selection procedure [...] has become methodologically more conservative, more given to preferring small wrinkles in existing analysis to genuinely new ideas "



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How should I respond to comments of reviewers?

- Be respectful and acknowledge the time and care referees have taken
- Engage positively and constructively with criticisms. Do not be defensive or aggressive
- Respond either by common themes in referee reports or take each report in turn
- Indicate what you agree with, what you disagree with and what changes if any you would propose to make



THE DECISION PROCESS AT CAMBRIDGE



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Publishing Proposal Meeting – Internal editorial, sales & marketing review

- Discussion of new projects
 - *Editors*
 - *Marketing*
 - *Sales*
- Ensuring that project is of sufficient quality (proposal, referee reports etc.)
- Financial model is viable (pricing, print run etc.)
- Marketing strategy (clarifying audience, refining the title etc.)



The Press Syndicate

- Governing body of Cambridge University Press
- 18 members - 'Syndics'
- All new publications (books and journals) must be approved by the Press Syndicate
- Applies to all authors – Nobel prizewinners and postdocs!



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WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT FROM A PUBLISHING CONTRACT?



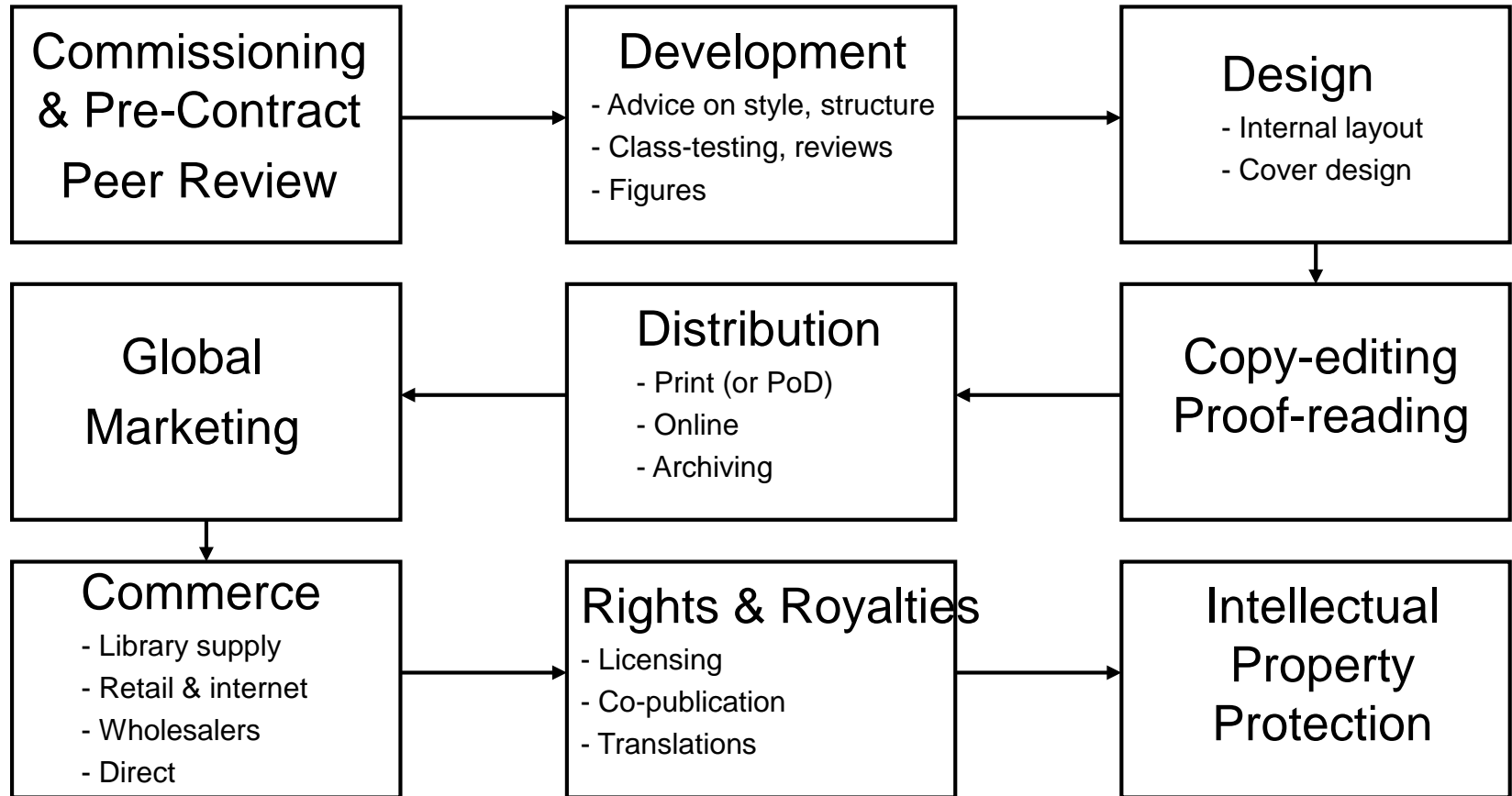
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The Book Contract

- Confirms details of title, word (or page) count and delivery schedule and proposed publishing format
- If contract offered on basis of a prospectus may have a clause requiring a “clearance reading” before final acceptance
- Confirms who owns copyright
- Confirms the obligations of the publisher
- Confirms financial terms



What does the publisher do?



SUBMITTING TO JOURNALS



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Selecting a journal – do plenty of homework!

- **Identifying the right journal is first big step! Ask:**
 - What is the hierarchy of journals in your field?
 - How significant are your findings or your argument? (The more significant, the higher you can aim. How much risk are you willing to take?)
 - Is your paper within the scope of the journal?
 - Are there any warning signs that journal is having problems? e.g late with publishing new issues
 - What is journal's policy on Open Access?
 - Is the journal indexed? What is its impact factor?



Maximise your chances of clearing first hurdle

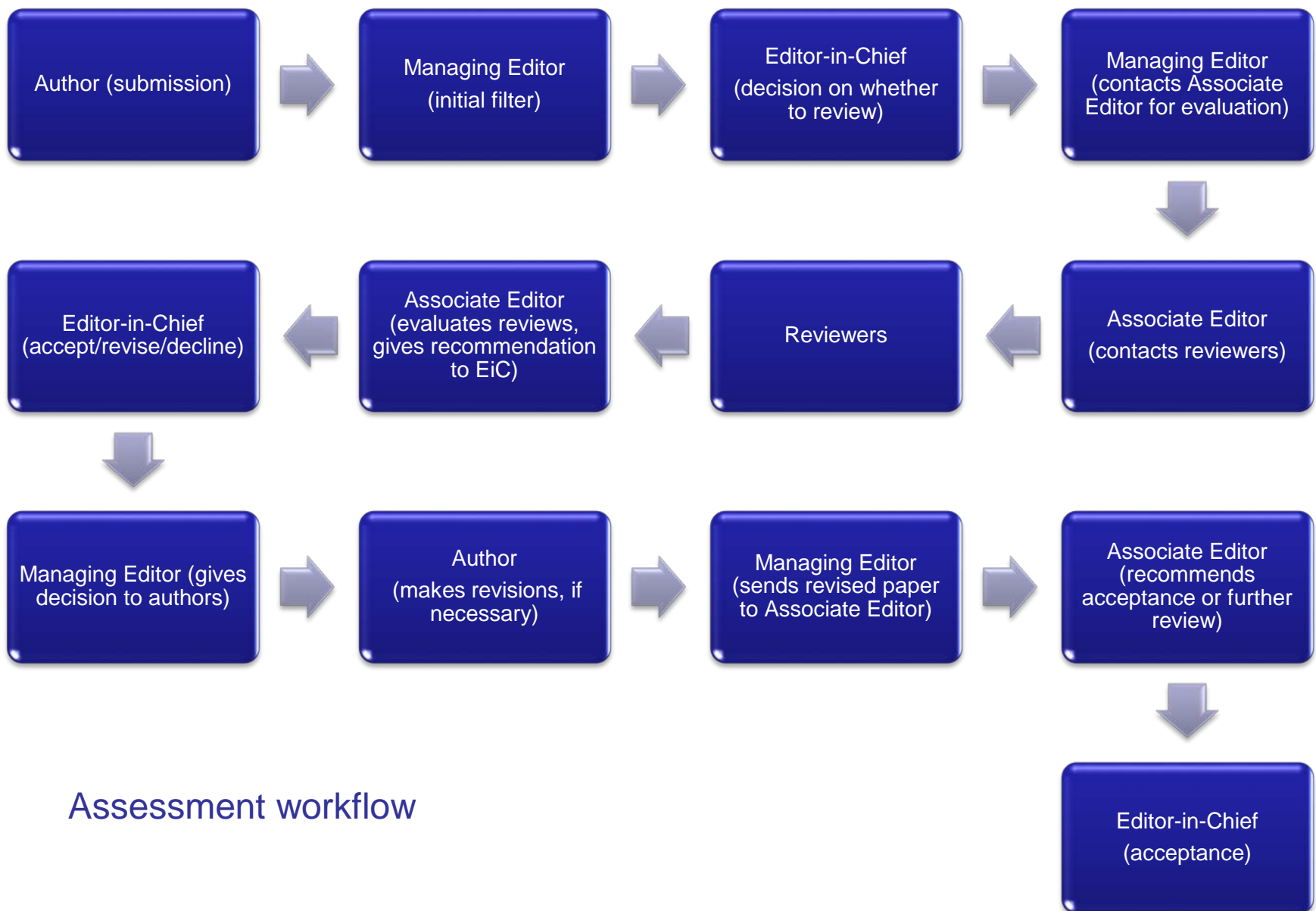
- Write a clear, informative abstract
- Obey the rules in *Instructions to Contributors*
- Make sure your paper
 - Is written in **good English**
 - Has got a **conclusion**
 - Has a **clear message** to show that the paper is **important to the target audience**
- One journal at a time



Advice from Journal editors

- “Read the journal you want to publish in, or at least the abstracts; attention to what the journal is actively interested in (topics, but also methods and theoretical approaches) will help you understand if your paper is appropriate or not.”
- "Read the Instructions for Contributors" (IFC) for the journal you want to publish in."





Assessment workflow



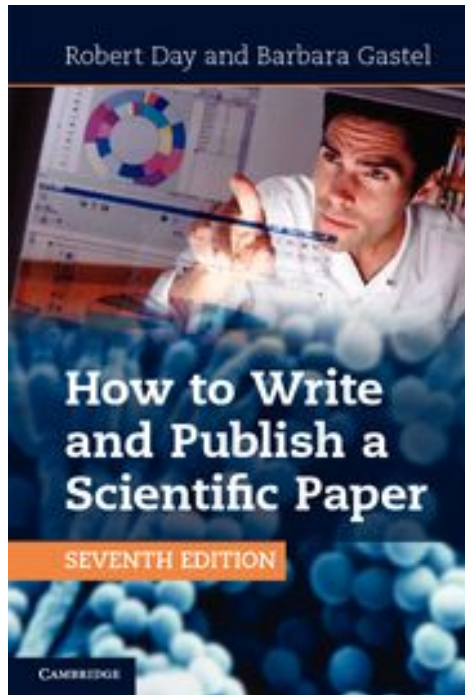
Post-acceptance

A good publisher adds value to the accepted manuscript with:

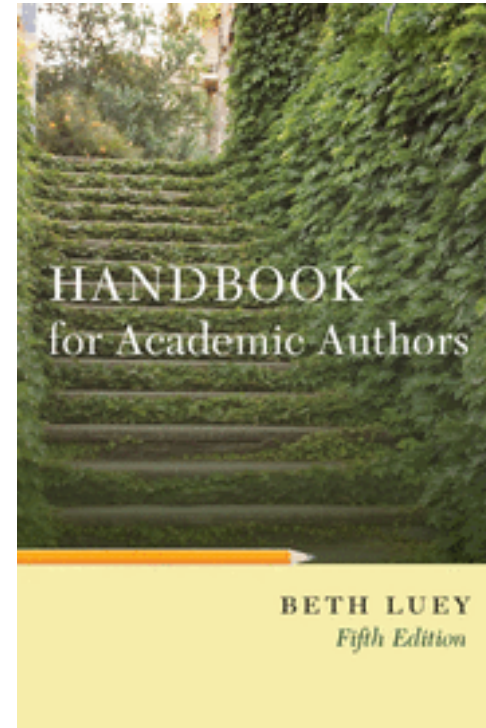
- Copy-editing
- Production at the highest industry standards
- State-of-the-art online delivery
- Usage statistics available at journal and paper level
- Discoverability; COUNTER compliance (usage data for digital product); CrossRef; bibliographic databases; citation and indexing services (eg ISI, Scopus); allowing Google to index;
- Open access options meeting all funding bodies' requirements



Very useful resources



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Questions?

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